

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-8, 10-14, 16-17, and 19-24 have been allowed.

Applicants have amended claim 1, 13, and 16 to include punctuations and correct for certain antecedent basis issues. Applicants contend that the amendments affect only formal matters and do not affect the scope of the allowed claims. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request entry of the above amendments prior to grant of this Application.

COMMENTS ON STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

It is recognized that in accordance with M.P.E.P. § 1302.14, the Examiner's reasons for allowance need not set forth all of the details as to why the claims are allowed.

It is not conceded that the Examiner's stated reasons for allowance are the only reasons for which the claims are allowable. The claims may be allowable for other reasons as well. In particular, it is not conceded that all of the limitations identified by the Examiner are necessary to distinguish the prior art of record or to satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112.

It is respectfully submitted that not all of the limitations listed in the reasons for allowance by the Office are required for patentability, and that other reasons for patentability may exist.

Applicant does not necessarily agree with the Statement of Reasons for Allowance to the extent that the Examiner identified only selected portions of the claim to the exclusion of other elements of the claim. When this occurs, the Examiner may not have considered the claimed subject matter as a whole and/or may not identify other reasons providing an independent basis for allowance of the claims.

In addition, each dependent claim stands on its own and is allowable on its own merits. In particular, each dependent claim may be allowable on the basis of a combination of some of the features recited in the dependent claim and its base claim(s), which combination of features may not include all of the limitations identified in the Examiner's reasons for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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